



## OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**Contact: Brenda L. Kielty**  
**(207) 626-8577**

### **Former Kittery Point Man Sentenced for Bottle Redemption Fraud**

AUGUSTA – Attorney General William J. Schneider announced that a former Kittery redemption center owner was sentenced to 21 months in jail, all but 21 days suspended, and two years of probation for his role in a large-scale bottle redemption fraud scheme.

Thomas Woodard, 50, formerly of Kittery Point, was sentenced on October 28, 2011 in York County Superior Court and ordered to pay \$10,000 in restitution. This past August, a York County jury found Woodard guilty of theft by deception for obtaining over \$10,000 in deposit refunds and handling fees from Maine beverage distributors for beverage containers that he knew were not eligible for redemption in Maine.

Woodard managed Green Bee Redemption Center, a licensed bottle redemption center in Kittery, from 2008 through June 2011.

“Green Bee Redemption became an outlet for out of state interests that wanted to illegally cash in through the redemption of their containers here in Maine,” said Attorney General Schneider. “Woodard’s crime increased the costs to both Maine consumers and Maine-based distributors, businesses that in turn provide jobs to Maine residents.”

Under Maine’s Bottle Bill, all beverage distributors charge a deposit of five cents for most soda, sports drink and bottled water containers sold in Maine. When the empty beverage containers are returned, the distributors refund the consumer the five cents originally paid as a deposit.

In addition to refunding the deposit, the distributors are required by the Bottle Bill to pay an additional handling fee to the redemption center. At the time of Woodard’s crime, the handling fee was three to three and one half cents per container. The distributors have no obligation to pay a deposit refund or handling fee for the redemption of any beverage container purchased outside of Maine.

New Hampshire has no bottle bill and no deposit is charged for any container sold in that State. The Massachusetts' bottle bill does not require a deposit for containers of water, juices, ice tea and sports drinks.

The evidence at trial showed that Woodard knowingly redeemed hundreds of thousands of containers brought in from New Hampshire and Massachusetts to Green Bee Redemption, receiving eight to eight and one half cents per container. He facilitated the establishment of satellite redemption operations in Massachusetts and New Hampshire. He then arranged for the after-hours delivery of truckloads of out of state bottles and redeemed them through Green Bee Redemption.

Since no deposit had been paid on the containers, the distributors were paying Woodard a refund of five cents that had never been paid to them as a deposit, along with the three to three and one half cents handling fee.

Woodard remains out on bail pending appeal to the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Leanne Robbin, Chief of Attorney General Schneider's Financial Crimes Division and was investigated by the Attorney General's Investigations Division, the Maine Department of Agriculture and the Kittery Police Department.

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